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TUESDAY, JANUARY 22, 1957

THE JERUSALEM POST

PRICE: 120 PRUTA
VOL. XXXIII, No. 8718

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MARGINAL COLUMN

It is always tempting to exaggerate the political importance of a single election, but there is nevertheless not only national but even international significance in the spectacular downward plunge of the Communist Party in the first French by-election since the Russians crushed the Hungarian insurrection. In the 1956 general elections, the Communist Party topped the list in the "first sector of the Seine" (the part of Paris which stretches along the left bank of the river) with over 120,000 votes. Less than a year later the vote had dropped to under 65,000. Admittedly, fewer people vote in by-elections, but normally the Communists are the party best able to turn out their supporters, whereas within the last 12 months the percentage of their total vote has dropped from 25.3 per cent to 20 per cent — that is from more than a quarter to less than a fifth of the votes.

ALTHOUGH there was no absolute majority among the 21 candidates in the first round of the by-election and the second ballot will be held on January 27, the winners in this Paris contest were the moderate conservatives, and top of the list was the late Tardieu of M. Antoine Pinay's party. He may have benefited from the incorrect supposition that he was in some way related to M. Andre Tardieu, a political leader within the Third Republic, as many of the older electors, swimming among 21 candidates, may have been relieved to discover a well-known name. The Tardieu's success would have been even more dazzling had he not been opposed by Dr. Souhassan, a general practitioner, and non-party candidate, who preached the same doctrine: cautious conservatism and the preservation of the French empire, while playing up on the general French suspicion of professional politicians. The doctor has recently published a best-selling novel and had a magnificently organized publicity campaign.

THE second significant fact of the by-election was the eclipse of "Mendecism" — the Radical supporters of the late M. Mendec-France. The Radicals dropped from a previous 30,000 to 20,000, and will certainly be eliminated if they do not willingly stand down in the second round. The by-election was provoked by the death of a Radical Deputy there will be one less supporter of M. Mendec-France in Parliament.

THE election campaign was focused by the Left on the Algerian war which is keeping almost half-a-million young Frenchmen in North Africa. Paris electors sharply turned their backs, not only on the Communists and the minority groups who advocated negotiating with the rebels, but also on the Radical supporters of M. Mendec-France who, without going all the way towards accepting the demands of the Algerian resistance, were bitterly critical of the Government's failure to restore peace. The vote will, therefore, encourage the present Socialist Government to pursue what their opponents say is the adventurous and reactionary policy. The party polled a slightly higher percentage of the votes than last year when they had what might seem to be the advantage of being in the opposition, and the parties which did best at the polls have supported the Government's foreign and overseas policies.

YN so far as the by-election carries a message to the outside world, it says "no" to the Communists and "yes" to the groups in France which defended the attack on Soviet support of the Algerian war and are ready to snap their fingers at the United Nations.

Philippines, Israel Exchanging Ministers

The Philippines and Israel have agreed to establish diplomatic relations at Legation level because they are "animated by the desire to strengthen further the friendly relations existing between them." It was announced last night. It is learned that Israel is to be represented in Manila by Mr. Yusef Shams, who will retain his present post as Minister to Burma. The Minister of the Republic of the Philippines in Israel will be his country's representative in Rome, Ambassador Ragala.

Hitherto, representation between Israel and the Philippines has been by honorary consuls.

BAREBOM DEBUT AT CARNegie HALL
NEW YORK, Monday (INA). — Daniel Barebom, 14-year-old Israeli pianist, last night made his New York concert debut at Carnegie Hall at a gala benefit presented by the U.N. International Symphony Orchestra Music Institute under the baton of Leopold Stokowski.

United Front Wins Big Margin in Poland

WARSAW, Monday (Reuter). — The plans of Mr. Wladyslaw Gomulka, First Secretary of Poland's Communist Party, to make Poland more democratic than any other Communist country have received an overwhelming "go ahead" from yesterday's polling in the parliamentary election.

Though final official details are not yet available, it is clear that there was an almost total poll in favour of "liberalization" for the people and sovereignty for the country in its relations with the Soviet Union. All the leaders have gone back to power with a "vote of confidence" such as any foreign statesman might envy. Mr. Gomulka, who has known disgrace and imprisonment at the hands of the same Communist United Workers Party which has once more put him back in power as First Secretary, received 90.4 per cent of the votes in his Warsaw constituency.

Elected with Mr. Gomulka are all the members of the Politbureau, according to provisional information issued by the official Polish Press Agency.

Cyraniewicz Returned
Among them are President of the Council of State Alexander Zawadzki and Prime Minister Jozef Cyrankiewicz, Foreign Minister Adam Rapacki and the recently appointed Minister of Agriculture Edward Ochab.

Mr. Gomulka, has, in fact, the support of all the men with him during the election. The Polish call the "October turning point" — a kind of cold revolution in which, despite the intervention of a mission from Moscow, the Polish revolution was confirmed and a new and freer relationship was established with the Soviet Union.

Defence Minister General Maria Gzyl, who succeeded the Polish-born Soviet Marshal Rokossovsky after he had been dropped from the Politbureau, also shared in the success.

Massive Problems
A Sejm which will be preoccupied with massive problems concerning coal-mining, industry generally, agriculture and foreign trade, will have the assistance of the new cabinet. Mr. Stefan Jedrychowski as Chairman of the Planning Commission in the Council of Ministers.

The National Unity Front, which produced the list of candidates used in the election, is dominated by Mr. Gomulka's party. They had over 50 per cent of the candidates. The United Peasant Party were allotted about 25 per cent and the Democratic Party 20 per cent.

The leaders of these two minority parties, Mr. Stefan Ignar and Professor Stanislaw Muczkowski, were also successful in the polls, along with some of their main supporters.

The "Front" also included 114 non-party members, representatives of trade unions and their main social organizations and 22 Catholics.

U.S. Reports 17th Soviet A-Bomb Test
WASHINGTON, Monday (Reuter). — The U.S. Atomic Energy Commission announced yesterday the 17th of a Soviet atomic test.

The announcement was the 17th of a Soviet atomic test and the 17th of a Soviet atomic test.



Egyptian POW's, part of the 499 repatriated yesterday from Israel, march past a Yugoslav U.N.E.F. soldier 22 kms. east of El Arish.

Ike: U.S. Will Help Nations To Guard or Acquire Freedom

WASHINGTON, Monday (Reuter). — President Eisenhower said in his inaugural address today that the U.S. was ready to pay the "full price" of a peace based on the justice and law.

The President, who was sworn in today for his second four-year term in the White House, added that in its search for peace the U.S. would respond when, in time of war or peril, nations that were or would be free asked for help.

The U.S. honoured the aspirations of those nations which, now captive, longed for freedom. It honoured "no less in this divided world than in a less tormented time" the people of the Soviet Union.

In too much of the earth today there was war, discord and anger, he said. "No nation, however old or great, escapes this tempest of change or turmoil."

"The decisive force is international Communism and the power that it controls," Mr. Eisenhower said. The designs of that power, dark in purpose, are clear in practice. Yet the world of international Communism has itself been shaken by a fierce and mighty force — the readiness of men who love freedom to pledge their lives to that love.

"Endeavour is no longer merely the name of a city. Henceforth it is a new and shining symbol of man's yearning to be free."

"We honour the aspirations of those nations which, now captive, long for freedom. We seek neither their military alliance nor any artificial limitation of our society. And they can know the warmth of the welcome that awaits them when, as must be, they join in the ranks of freedom."

UK Queries Jordan On Treaty Review
LONDON, Monday. — Britain has told Jordan she was willing to enter into "immediate discussions" on the future of their 1948 treaty of alliance, as announced in London today.

A note to Jordan last week, issued by the Foreign Office today, said the British Government asked for the "views" of the Jordan Government with regard to the place and date of these discussions.

The Jordan Government has said it intends to approach Britain to negotiate an end to the 20-year treaty under which Britain has subsidised Jordan and has maintained military bases there.

The note followed the Cairo agreement between Egypt, Syria and Saudi Arabia to supply Jordan with money and arms to replace the 1948 annual British subsidy.

The British note recalled "the past friendship" between Britain and Jordan and said the British Government is "anxious that the treaty relations between the two countries should serve to maintain and strengthen this friendship, and not stand in its way."

The "Times" editorially advised the British Government today to pull its troops out of the bases in Jordan — Mafraq and Akaba — "before they are thrown out." In the circumstances of today, neither of the bases has any real value, the paper commented.

In Amman, the Jordan Ministry of Education proclaimed January 19, the day the agreement for Arab aid to Jordan was signed, a national holiday which will be observed annually. (Reuter, UP, INA)

VOROSHILOV TO VISIT CHINA IN SPRING
HONG KONG, Monday (Reuter). — Soviet President Kliment Voroshilov has accepted an invitation from the Chinese President Mao Tse-tung to visit China between April 15 and May 5, the New China News Agency reported today.

Israel Hands Over First Batch of 499 PoW's

Returning PoW's Threaten Israel
Four Israelis Not Yet Back

TEL AVIV, Monday. — The first contingent of 499 Egyptian prisoners-of-war were handed over to the Egyptian authorities today by the United Nations, 22 kms. east of El Arish. The repatriation will proceed at the rate of 500 men and 15 officers daily. Dr. Louis Gaillard, International Red Cross representative in Israel, told the Press tonight.

According to the agreement with the Egyptian authorities, the four Israeli prisoners-of-war should have been transferred to U.N.E.F. today, although Dr. Gaillard had not yet received confirmation of this. It is learned that they will be repatriated after 2,500 Egyptians have gone back, that is to say, within five days.

Today's group comprised 496 men and two officers and a medical officer. They travelled in a convoy of Army trucks from the camp, accompanied by an Israeli officer and military policemen. An ambulance with a P.O.W. doctor also escorted the convoy, and will be attached to future convoys.

There are 5,800 prisoners of war in Israel. Dr. Gaillard noted that Egypt has reiterated a demand for the release of all men held here, including those captured before the campaign.

Digwi to Fly Back
General Mohammed Fawad El Digwi, former Governor-General of Gaza, will probably return by U.N.E.F. plane in a fortnight. He and his three young daughters are now at Tel Hashomer hospital while his wife undergoes a major operation. Dr. Gaillard noted that the hospital had allowed the family to remain near Mrs. Digwi. They expect her recuperation to take about a fortnight.

General Digwi, it will be recalled, was one of the judges on the Egyptian military tribunal which sentenced to death two Jews, Moshe Minkow and Samuel Azzar, in January 1955. They were hanged a month later.

Dr. Gaillard received the first batch of prisoners from the families of Egyptian prisoners only three days before they were due for repatriation. The P.O.W.'s complained would not be receiving word from their relatives. Dr. Gaillard enquired about this through the International Red Cross in Geneva.

1,965 Letters Arrive
During his last visit to the camp, they again protested, and he took them to Geneva. Finally, 1,965 letters arrived. Friday last, Dr. Gaillard does not know whether the prisoners' mail was actually being sent through the Red Cross. According to the Geneva Convention they are entitled to write four postcards and letters monthly.

Dr. Gaillard received letters from three of the captive Israelis on December 8 and September 23, but no mail from Lt. Jonathan Elkes, the wounded pilot. On one occasion Dr. Gaillard sent a parcel and mail from Lt. Elkes' relatives with him to the Red Cross delegation in Cairo. However, he could not check on its ultimate delivery.

Mr. M. Thudicum, International Red Cross representative in Egypt, has twice visited the Israeli prisoners and reported that they are in good health, except that Lt. Elkes still suffered from his injury. During the 11 weeks of their internment, the Egyptian P.O.W.'s submitted no serious complaints to the Red Cross, said Dr. Gaillard. They asked for more blankets, better bedding or changes in the menu.

Dr. Gaillard's task here being virtually completed, he might go to the Mau Mau internment camps in Kenya. Today, a pair of 18-year-old Catholic refugees from Hungary were brought to him for "repatriation" to the United States. They had apparently strayed from their route.

Finnish Seamen Urge Free Israel Passage
HELSINKI, Monday (Reuter). — The Finnish Seamen's Union announced today it had telegraphed the U.N. Secretary-General, Mr. Dag Hammarskjöld, urging the U.N. to take measures to ensure free navigation through the Suez Canal and the Gulf of Akaba for the ships of all nations, including Israel.

They were told by the Jordan soldiers that there was a general strike had broken out in Israel and that there were violent demonstrations and riots against the Government here.

On the Israeli side of Mandelbaum Gate, a customs search turned up dozens of cigarette lighters and flash-light bulbs, hundreds of packets of cigarette paper and quantities of nylon stockings. The authorities confiscated the goods, valued at several hundred pounds, which various pilgrims were trying to smuggle into the country. (INA)

M.K. Makes Jordan Pilgrimage
The first Knesset Member ever to cross the armistice lines returned on Sunday from a two-day visit to Jordan. Mr. Youssef Khams, Mafraq member of the Knesset, returned from a two-day visit to Jordan. The Crown Prince has been authorized to speak on behalf of Iraq, Turkey, Syria and Pakistan in his talks in London and Washington.

The four Governments are reported to plan a meeting of the full Baghdad Pact Council, with Britain present, in Karachi in March. Iraq declined to attend Council meetings attended by Britain following the Anglo-French intervention in Egypt last autumn.

Israeli Crown Prince To Confer with Macmillan
LONDON, Monday (Reuter). — Crown Prince Abdul Illah of Iraq arrived tonight for policy talks with Premier Harold Macmillan and Foreign Secretary Selwyn Lloyd during his stay here on his way to Washington from the meeting of the four Muslim members of the Baghdad Pact, according to British sources.

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